

LSESU should introduce a BME Students' Officer

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This union notes:

- LSE has one of the most ethnically diverse student bodies in the country
- LSESU has a proud history of inclusion and liberation for various marginalised groups
- The National Union of Students (NUS), as well as many Student Unions across the country (e.g. UCL and Nottingham), have 4 liberation groups: women, disabled students, LGBT students, and BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) students
- LSESU currently has three liberation groups: women, disabled students and LGBT students
- In the past, some LSESU Anti-Racism Officers have chosen to address some of the issues relating to BME liberation
- The role of the LSESU Anti-Racism Officer is to “eliminate and counter all forms of racism based on race, religion or nationality”
- The Anti-Racism Officer is not constitutionally obligated to deal with issues of underrepresentation, inclusivity and wider engagement
- The role of Anti-Racism Officer is not a liberation position, and students do not need to self define to run or vote for it
- Currently there is no mechanism to ensure a BME representative on the LSESU executive
- Historically, the SU executive has comprised of majority white and Home students, despite a sizeable proportion of students being non-white or International
- A clause in the 2014 LSESU Community Voting motion outlines that were a BME officer to be introduced, they would be elected by community voting

This union believes:

- Issues affecting BME students extend much further than anti-racism alone, for example wider engagement, representation and inclusivity
- Since there is no constitutional safeguard to ensure BME liberation issues are discussed; these concerns have been, and may continue to be, overlooked

-Having a BME Officer will ensure that BME concerns are discussed and are at the heart of Student Union activity

-Having a BME Officer will ensure that a caucus for self-defining BME students exists, and that they can be in control of their liberation

-The research being produced by the *BME at LSE* focus groups confirms a perception of a “cliquey”, “white” and “middle-class” Student Union

-The research confirms the need for BME representation within the SU

This union resolves:

-To amend the Union’s byelaws to establish a part time BME liberation officer, who will become a member of the SU executive

-This officer’s role will be constitutionally defined as being responsible for “dealing with issues of underrepresentation, inclusivity, wider engagement and other issues concerning BME liberation”

-The Democracy Committee be required to call an election for this position no later than the end of Michaelmas Term in 2014. Subsequent elections will be held during Lent Term elections.

-Candidates running for this position must self-define as being BME (Black or Ethnic Minority). This consists of being of "non-white" descent as defined by the Institute of Race Relations. Other groups who feel they are historically oppressed and face institutional barriers in society based on ethnicity, may also self define

-This officer will be elected by community voting

-The roles of Anti-Racism Officer and BME Officer are different, and should therefore both exist in their own right

-The existence of an Anti-Racism Officer should not be used as justification for constraining or dissolving the BME Officer, or vice versa

Passed 21.3.2014

Yes: 177

No: 98

Undecided: 8